

## Virgin Blue Holdings Limited (ASX:VBA) Virgin Australia touches down for the first time on home soil

**Sydney, 4 May 2011:** Virgin Australia touched down for the first time today at Sydney Airport, signaling the dawn of a new travel experience for all Australians.

Significantly, the company will introduce the “Virgin Australia” name and brand for both its domestic and international operations, allowing it to build one strong brand that will be recognised globally.

Virgin Australia Airlines will implement one look and feel across all of its airlines in order to encapsulate its seamless proposition of style, quality and competitive prices to leisure and business travellers.

Sir Richard Branson, who launched the new airline identity along with CEO and Managing Director John Borghetti, said the Virgin Australia brand represented an exciting new chapter for the airline.

“I’m absolutely thrilled with the new look and feel of Virgin Australia’s domestic product and I know it will shake up the Australian travel market on an even larger scale than it did 10 years ago. What you see here today is a great airline that now represents what the Virgin brand does worldwide: style, innovation, quality and value for money, along with the best service.

“The new brand, livery, product and service offering will help to transform Virgin Australia into a contemporary dynamic airline with a product to compete with the best worldwide. Providing an attractive Business Class offering means we can continue to offer the best value airfares in the sky, regardless of which class you fly”, Sir Richard said.

Virgin Australia Airlines’ first ever CEO John Borghetti said the consolidation of the brand into one was a pivotal point in the airline’s Game Change Program and built on the significant announcements made in recent months.

“From today, Virgin Australia will operate domestically in Australia. By the end of the year, our international product V Australia and Pacific Blue will also operate under the Virgin Australia name.”

“Virgin Australia will be the airline of choice for all market segments. We will do this by bringing the magic back to flying – providing a seamless experience, with excellent service that can be tailored to the individual.

“In re-positioning the airline we have kept all the great attributes for which Virgin Blue is renowned – the “can-do” attitude, the competitive pricing and the genuine friendly service – and we have elevated it to a new level”, Mr Borghetti said.

The company assembled a team of experts in their fields to assist with the re-launch of the airline, including renowned Chef Luke Mangan, fashion designer Juli Grbac and Tim Greer from Tonkin Zulaikha Greer Architects. Virgin Australia Creative Director Hans Hulsbosch led the development of the airline’s economy and business class cabins, along with the new brand and livery.

A brand new Boeing 737-800 and an Airbus A330-200 aircraft showcased the new in-flight experience, complete with luxury leather seating, contemporary interior design, high quality in-flight products and gourmet food inspired by Luke Mangan.

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The Boeing 737-800 features the innovative Sky Interior, with larger overhead lockers, mood lighting and sculpted sidewalls, designed to provide guests with a feeling of spaciousness and light.

Virgin Australia will also revolutionise the travel experience in its domestic ports, with architect-designed luxury airport lounges, the first to be launched in Melbourne and Brisbane shortly, along with a new look and feel for Virgin Australia airport terminals.

Mr Borghetti also today confirmed that Virgin Australia would re-launch its frequent flyer program Velocity Rewards later this year, to offer members more options to get the best value out of their points, more personalised service and more rewards for loyalty. Velocity currently provides a global network with access to over 600 destinations around the world, global lounge access with our reciprocal partners and exclusive worldwide travel privileges and rewards.

“We are very proud of the progress we have made in less than 12 months. It’s all due to the hard work and dedication of our excellent team and we have many more exciting developments to come.

“Ten years ago Virgin Blue changed the game in the Australian aviation industry. Now through our Game Change Program, Virgin Australia will transform the Australian airline industry as we know it and provide Australians with more choice and a superior travel experience.”

Over the past 12 months the company has also announced:

- Significant expansion of its global and regional flight network through alliances with Air New Zealand, Etihad Airways and Skywest Airlines, with the Delta alliance awaiting regulatory approval.
- Up to 18 new turboprop aircraft to service regional destinations
- The launch of V Australia flights to Abu Dhabi, becoming the first Australian carrier to operate to the Middle East in 20 years
- Business Class seating and service, to be rolled out across the domestic fleet
- The new Airbus A330 service between Sydney and Perth, providing luxury and comfort to transcontinental travellers
- A new exclusive food and beverage menu designed by Luke Mangan for both our domestic and international airlines, with a focus on fresh Australian produce
- Stylish new uniforms for staff, created by designer Juli Grbac
- Australia’s first premium valet service and direct lounge entry at Sydney Domestic airport, offering premium guests a streamlined, hassle-free experience

**ENDS**

**Media Contacts:** Emma Copeman 0421 702 193 or Melissa Thomson 0408 660 891

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